

Final

EAST COUNTY CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

Meeting of January 2, 2008

Eastern Montgomery Regional Services Center
3300 Briggs Chaney Road
Silver Spring, Maryland 20904

Members Present: Kim Bobola, PhD (Chair), Colleen Ionata (Vice Chair), Sheala Durant (Secretary), Bill Strassberger (Parliamentarian), Thomas Aylward, Kimberly Y. Campbell, Jemal A. Cheatham, Marva R. Deskins, G. Stanley Doore, Will Kenlaw, Allan Mulligan, Ismael Gama, Prasiddh Sinha, John Thomas, Andre Carl Whisenton.

Members Absent: Tracy DuPree Davis, Kim Jones, Benoy Thomas.

Staff: Anjoo Chohda (Eastern Montgomery Regional Services Center).

Guests: Claire Iseli (Councilmember Marilyn Praisner's office), Danny Jacobs, (Reporter, Gazette newspaper), Crystal DeVance Wilson, Community Resident, Scott A. Gutschick, Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Services – Planning Section, Eileen Finnegan, Editor (Hillandale Citizen's Association), Jessica Jones, Montgomery County Board of Elections; Maura Lynch (Assistant State's Attorney for Montgomery County).

Call to Order: The chair called the meeting to order at 7:20 p.m.

Citizen's Forum: Chair Bobola welcomed the guests and wished everyone a very Happy and Prosperous New Year. Guests were asked to identify any issues or concerns that they wished to share with the Board. Additionally, they were requested to state what action they wanted the Board to take.

- **Jessica Jones:** Individuals are being recruited to serve as election judges for the February 12, 2008 elections. Anyone interested should email Jessica.Jones@montgomerycountymd.gov or call 240-777-8577.

Montgomery County residents who wish to vote in the 2008 Presidential Primary Election were reminded that the deadline for voter registration is 9:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 22, 2008. Applications for the primary election may be obtained by calling the Voter Information Service at 240-777-VOTE until Tuesday, January 15. Applications are also available in county libraries, regional services centers, all offices of the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services, the Motor Vehicle Administration, and all U.S. Post Offices or may be downloaded at www.777vote.org or www.montgomerycountymd.gov/elections.

- **Crystal DeVance Wilson** (community resident): Ms. Wilson has lived in Burtonsville for the past ten years. She expressed concerns regarding the underserved in East County, specifically in the Briggs Chaney/Castle Boulevard. She also conveyed an interest in being involved with the East County Citizens Advisory Board. After sharing these comments, Ms. Wilson completed a form on which she identified specific issues of importance to the underserved and suggested a needs assessment.
- **Danny Jacobs** wished everyone a Happy New Year.
- **Ms. Maura Lynch** (Assistant State's Attorney for Montgomery County). Ms. Lynch informed us of the position she holds and that she is assigned to the Silver Spring and Wheaton areas. As such, Ms. Lynch takes cases for our community. She also let us know that she has been attending community meetings.

Speakers

Chair Bobola announced that Senator Rona Kramer was not able to attend this meeting. Senator Kramer will be invited to attend a meeting at another time. Anise Key Brown, Director was not able to attend this meeting due to a family matter.

Scott A. Gutschick (Planning Section Manager, Montgomery County Fire & Rescue Services):

A brief introduction was given. Copies of the slides of the presentation were disseminated to Board members. The presentation highlighted the following:

- Fire and Rescue, and EMS incident statistics for East County;
- Details about the proposed Fire Station for East County; and
- FY08 Montgomery County Fire & Rescue Services planning initiatives and resource enhancements; prototype "CAFS" Engine; study of the proposed East County Fire-Rescue station; Burtonsville Station 15 Expansion.

The Capital Improvements Program (CIP)/Site Evaluation for the proposed Fire Station in East County are before the County Council. Anise Key Brown, Director Eastern Montgomery Regional Services Center, is in the process of forming a committee that will be made up of members of the community, business owners, residents, Montgomery County Department of Fire and Rescue – including Scott Gutschick – and other employees, Montgomery County Offices of Management and Budget, Montgomery County Department of Public Works and Transportation as well as a representative from the Montgomery County Park and Planning.

The Burtonsville Station 15 Expansion is scheduled to be completed in CY2009 at a project cost of approximately \$1.1 million.

Q&A Session was conducted with the Board members and guests after the presentation.

- **Eileen Finnegan** (a resident of the Hillandale area) commented that some residents who live in nearby areas, including Beltsville and Calverton, rely on the Prince George's County Fire & Rescue Services, as well as the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue services. A concern was the recommended budget cut for Station 12 that could leave the station without a ladder truck for a period of time. The concern is that budget cuts can affect the services the community needs and has come to expect. **Mr. Gutschick** responded that Montgomery County and Prince George's County Fire & Rescue work together as they provide needed services in our area; however, there could be more collaboration. If a ladder truck is taken out of service for a period of time, and a need arises for a ladder truck, this truck would be called in from the next nearest fire station.
- **Stan Doore** commented that approximately one-third of the Fire & Rescue Services responses in East County are for Riderwood.
- **Sheala Durant** asked where the Fire & Rescue Services workforce resides, and how diversity issues are being handled. **Mr. Gutschick** responded that there is more and increasing diversity in the Department. Most of the workforce resides outside of Montgomery County (e.g., Fredrick County, Washington County, Philadelphia and Virginia). Chief Tom Carr would like a greater focus on workforce housing. He is investigating the possibility of obtaining bigger properties for new fire stations so that housing could also be constructed on such properties for our firefighters to use.
- **Will Kenlaw** inquired about the extent of Spanish as a second language for firefighters. **Mr. Gutschick** replied that there has been a tremendous effort made in this area. The chief is attempting to place firefighters who have dual-language skills in those areas of the county where non-English speakers are prevalent.

Mr. Gutschick offered to meet with any individuals who had additional questions after the ECCAB meeting.

Approval of Minutes:

Chair Bobola asked members of the board to review the November 7th minutes for revisions. Stan Doore proposed editions to the minutes.

[January 2, 2008 – 1] A motion to approve the minutes of November 7th 2007 as amended was offered. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

Council's Report: Claire Iseli

- *Update on Council Member Marilyn Praisner.* Mrs. Praisner was involved in a car accident on November 16th. She has been recuperating and working from home. Today, Mrs. Praisner attended a meeting on the eastern shore with the Maryland Association of Counties. She conveys her thanks for the wishes and concerns expressed for her after her accident. She is looking forward to a very challenging budget year.

Director's Report: Anise Key Brown

Chair Bobola mentioned that Anise Key Brown will be sending an email update to board members.

Chair's Report

1. The East County leadership reception, *Sun Rises in the East*, will be rescheduled for the spring of 2008.
2. **Community Service Day/Adopt-a-Road Event** scheduled for the fall was canceled due to inclement weather. The Adopt-a-Road activities will be coordinated and details worked out through the Ad Hoc Committee (John Thomas and Marva Deskins)
3. **Washington Adventist Hospital.** Will Kenlaw announced that a presentation on the Washington Adventist Hospital will be given on Monday, January 7th, from 7 to 8 pm. President Jere Stocks will share updates for the hospital's move to East County. This presentation is open to the public and will be hosted by the Allen Chapel Community Development Foundation at Allen Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church located at 2518 Fairland Road, Silver Spring, Maryland 20904.
4. **Affordable Housing Task Force:** Tom Aylward, Stan Doore and Kim Bobola attended a forum on the challenges the county faces in providing affordable housing. A volunteer task force has been convened, and it has developed a number of recommendations that are being presented in public forums for public input.
5. **Stan Doore** disseminated the State Domestic Migration 2000-2007 Report which is based on data from the United States Bureau of the Census.
6. Chair Bobola announced:
 - Paint Branch High school construction project is now on time. The community had been concerned about possible delays in the project. Consequently, members of the community petitioned the Montgomery County Public School System to stick with the timetable in the long-range plans for school construction and modernization. These efforts were met with success, for now, pending budget approval later this spring.
 - Kim Jones had organized and provided parent/community information session on navigating Montgomery County Public Schools. *Kudos* were extended to Kim Jones for this successful event.
 - ECCAB Committee meetings will be held on January 9th. For committee assistance:
 - Chuck Crisostomo will provide assistance to the Economic Development and Infrastructure Committee.
 - Gwen Haney will provide help to the Outreach Committee.

- Kim Bobola will provide assistance to the Services Committee.
- Committees/committee chairs were asked to identify their top priorities for the year. Topics were reviewed. In September through November, the board identified its priorities as: **Public Safety, Health Forum, Burtonsville Shopping Center, Education,** and the **ICC**. (*Refer to page # 11 and # 12 of handout distributed by Chair Bobola*)
- With regard to the Quad Structure, Quad 3 needs more members

Committee Reports

Outreach Committee: Marva Deskins

The Outreach Committee discussed preliminary plans to hold an event sometime in April or May. The committee continued a discussion on the Art Show.

Economic Development and Infrastructure Committee: Tom Aylward

The committee did not meet, but instead attended the Montgomery County's Affordable Housing Task Force Forum held on December 12th at the Eastern Montgomery Regional Services Center. The Task force highlighted on the following issues:

- Issue # 1: Preserve Affordable Housing and suggested recommendations
- Issue # 2: Create Affordable Housing and recommendations
- Issue # 3: Adopt Regulatory Reform and recommendations
- Issue # 4: Achieve Community Acceptance of Affordable Housing and recommendations

Services Committee: Colleen Ionata

The Services Committee did not meet in December. The book, *Choosing Civility*, is available for board members to review. Follow up action will be taken. The committee is planning to monitor the Paint Branch High school construction project. The committee will also determine if they can provide support for the Fire Station and the new Police Station in East County.

Stan Doore discussed page # 2 of his handout on *Choosing Civility*. This is a Leadership Montgomery countywide initiative which involves multiple partners working together to enhance the quality of life. It emphasizes the importance of civility for all who live and work in Montgomery County. For additional information, visit the website: www.choosecivilitymc.org Colleen Ionata indicated that a letter has been written. Colleen/the Board will seek clarification from Anise Key Brown regarding who should receive copies of that letter.

Stan Doore presented a letter written by resident Margaret Poore on “tagging,” a gang-related activity. This was presented for consideration for action by the board.

Old Business - None

New Business

The board discussed the letter written by Margaret Poore. Stan Doore asked that the Board recommend that the County Council and County Executive take positive action regarding tagging. Bill Strassberger asked if Ms. Poore had contacted Police Officer, Joy Patil. Stan Doore said this is a county-wide problem. The police have established a Gang Prevention Task Force. A detailed discussion that involved Board members and Clair Iseli followed.

[January 2, 2008 – 2] Stan Doore motioned that the Board recommend to the County Council and County executive that tagging be addressed at the local level.

[January 2, 2008 – 3] A motion was made to move Stan's motion to the Outreach Committee. Voting was conducted by show of hands. 14 members voted for the motion. The Motion was carried and referred to the Outreach Committee.

Claire Iseli offered to contact Ms. Poore on this matter.

Adjournment : The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 pm.

The next East County Citizens Advisory Board meeting will be held on ***Wednesday, February 6, 2008.***